



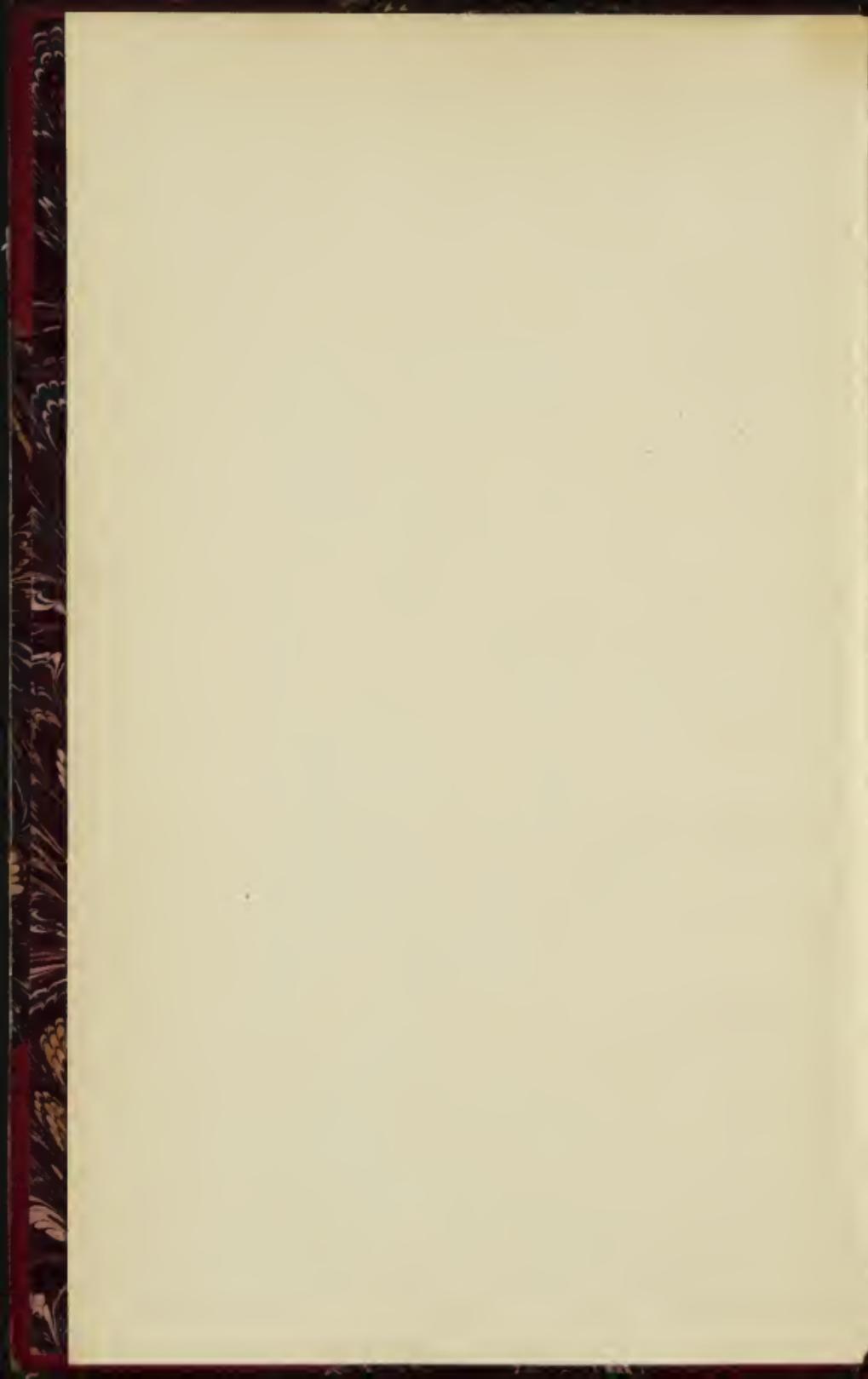
GUACANAGARI PONTIAC BLACK HAWK
MONTEZUMA CAPTAIN PIPE KEOKUK
GUATIMOTZIN LOGAN SACAGAWEA
POWHATAN CORNPLANTER BENITO JUAREZ
POCAHONTAS JOSEPH BRANT MANGUS
SAMOSET RED JACKET COLORADAS
MASSASUIT LITTLE TURTLE LITTLE CROW
KING PHILIP TECUMSEH SITTING BULL
UNCAS OSCEOLA CHIEF JOSEPH
TEDYUSKUNG SEQUOYA GERONIMO
SHABONEE

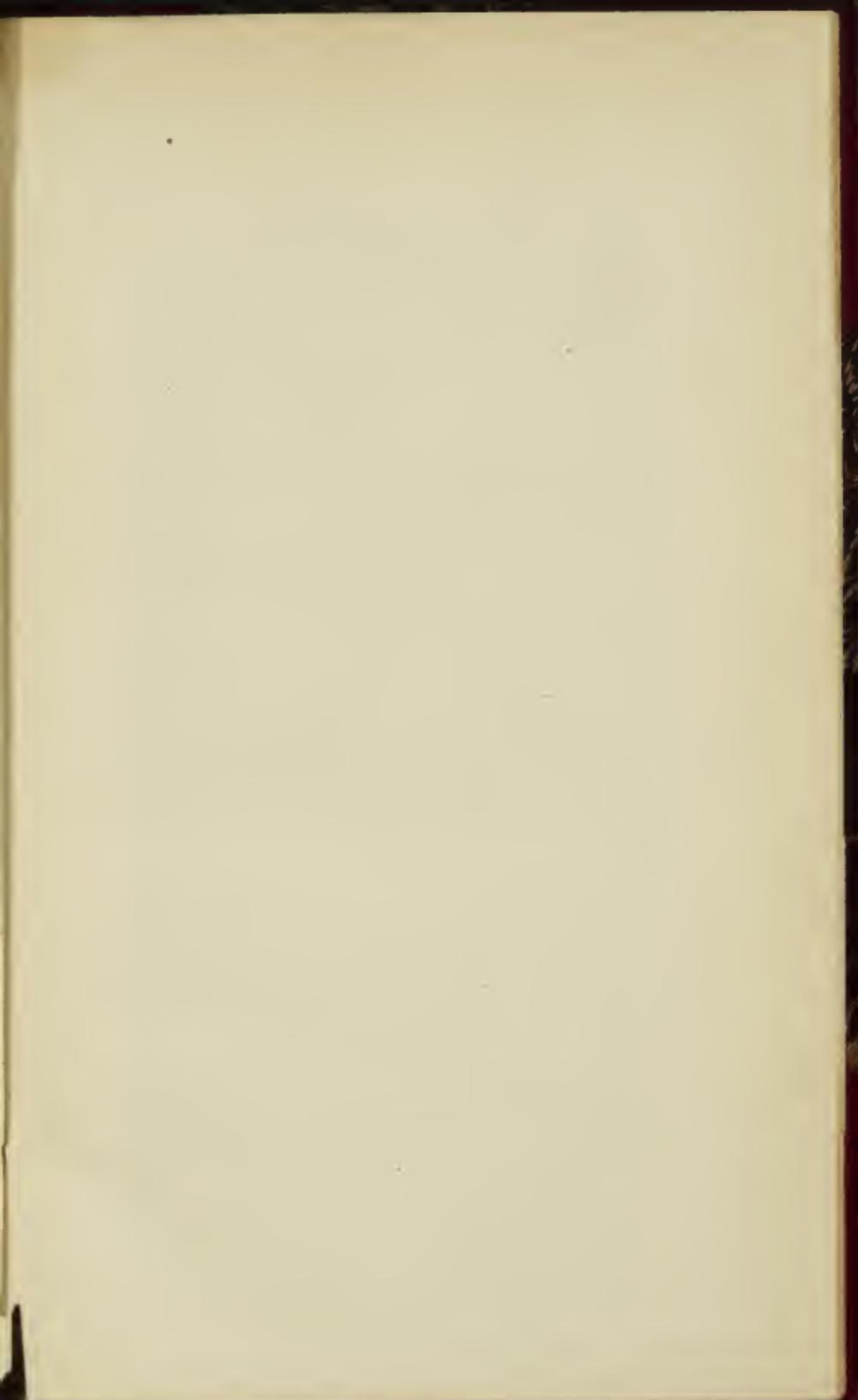


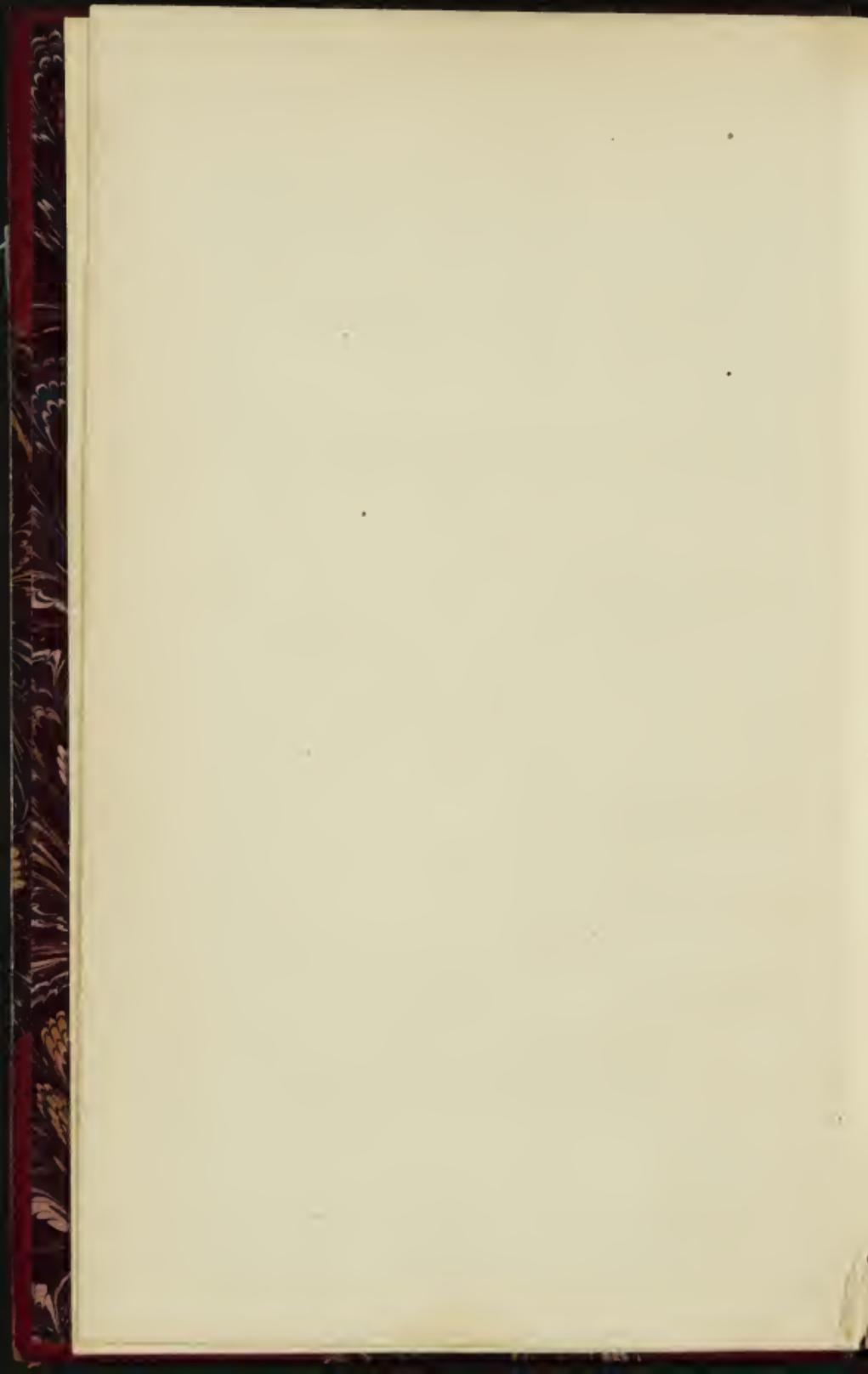
TO PERPETUATE THE HISTORY
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
PEOPLE REPRESENTED BY THE
ABOVE CHIEFS AND WISE MEN
THIS COLLECTION HAS BEEN
GATHERED BY THEIR FRIEND
EDWARD EVERETT AYER

AND PRESENTED BY HIM
TO
THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY
1911









Ayer
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M5
1813

A MEMOIR

*On the actual relations and future policy of the
United States, with the Indian Tribes.*

THE example of benevolence displayed by the United States towards the aboriginal tribes of this continent, has excited the admiration and silenced the envy of the world. Every other nation has made them only instruments of destruction; while the United States, actuated by a policy more humane, liberal, and consistent with the morals of a free people, and adopting those generous maxims, which have been established by the philosophy of the age, have sought to convert them to peaceable and social happiness. This benignity has been, indeed, ill requited; yet, though unsuccessful as to those unhappy tribes, it cannot be repented, however much it be lamented, that, instead of being repaid by gratitude and confidence, the return has been treachery and cruelty.

It must be taken into view, however, that the barbarous and ungrateful conduct of the Indian tribes, could never have been displayed, nor would there have been any motive for its exercise, had not the incitements and the means of massacre been provided by an enemy so much the more abominable, since the Indians can neither boast of social knowledge, nor do they profess the precepts of the Gospel of peace and good will towards man. The facility with which the Indian tribes have been instigated to raise the knife against their benefactors, however, presents the strongest motive for a deliberative re-consideration of our policy towards them.

Ayer 3625

A new epoch is in fact produced in our Indian affairs, by the existing war. Claims of the highest nature to human happiness and to national security, demand of the constituted authorities to enquire.... How should the United States act in future towards the Indian tribes?

While any means exist of seducing them by a foreign power, their residence in our neighborhood must not only be productive of severe retaliations by our frontier settlers, but keep our frontier if not in constant danger, at least in constant alarm and insecurity. It is too obvious that a generous policy will be thrown away upon them; and that for all the largesses and favors bestowed, the return we are sure to meet is the tomahawk and scalping knife.

To be just to ourselves, is now the principal consideration; since, to be generous beyond example, has proved, not merely of no avail, but has, in fact, tended to cherish in our bosoms a remorseless enemy, insusceptible of generous emotions.

The Indian tribes may be considered in four different points of view. 1. As co-occupants and sharers of the soil in common. 2. As allies by interest and compact. 3. As subjects of the superior government within the territorial limits defined by the peace of 1783. 4. As a people who, by their wanton aggression and treachery, have, according to the usages of civilized nations, forfeited their claim, whatever it may be, to further protection from the United States, and whose barbarous character requires that they be treated as faithless, and the country they have deluged with blood, as forfeited and conquered to the United States forever.

The first of these views being embraced in the fourth, it is not required to discuss the question, whether the occupancy of the soil arises out of a natural or social title to property: whatever that

title may have been, they have forfeited it, by becoming public enemies, without motive or provocation; and the United States according to the usages of all nations, have the right to seize and expel them from the territory and exclude them for ever.

In the second point of view, they may be considered as allies, wherever our humanity has induced treaties with them, or by the courtesy of our government, and the benevolence of its policy.

In this view all those who have violated treaties have forfeited all future claim upon us.

In the third view (of subjects) they bear that relation to us, as to foreign nations specially, since all civilized nations have recognized the title to dominion, which we established at the revolution, and which is recorded in the treaty of Paris of 1783; and upon the same universal principles no nation has a right to interfere in our internal jurisdiction.

As allies we have treated them ourselves; but no nation according to received usages, has a right to interfere with any people within our dominion; to form any compacts with them; much less to stimulate them to hostility against us. We may form some idea of our situation, in relation to the Indians, by referring to a possible case: Were the United States to send agents on their part into Wales or Scotland, both originally being occupied by barbarous nations or tribes conquered by the English, in order to stimulate them to cut the throats of the people of Gloucestershire or Cumberland: would this conduct be applauded or countenanced by the world? Would it be less a cause of war, or a greater violation of the sovereignty, or a greater act of treachery to the government of England, than it has been to send, in a time of peace, emissaries among the Indian tribes within our territorial limits, those limits solemnly recognized by her own treaty of 1783....in order to stir these savages up to desolate our hamlets and massacre our women and children on our frontiers.

The conquest of Canada, which has now become necessary to the safety of our frontier : desolating and retaliating enterprises would be the necessary effect of their being suffered to retain their former positions in a peace : the future security and duration of the union, will not leave the question concerning the Indians at rest, but in a manner the most decided and effectual ; and it will, independent of Canada, require a distinct and peculiar consideration ; for the course which we shall pursue with those faithless tribes east of the Mississippi, will hold a powerful and durable influence on our relations with the tribes west of that river, and in that vast region which borders on lake Superior.

It will not be requisite to enter into any enumeration of the various tribes, who occupy the region north west of a line drawn direct from the mouth of the Sandusky, to the mouth of the Illinois ; the government possesses all the means of ascertaining their numbers, the positions which they have occupied, and for ascertaining the great expenditures made for several years to promote among them the knowledge of civilization, and to rescue them from the vicissitudes of the savage life. But it will be worthy of their consideration, whether it be not now incumbent on the United States to determine at once and for ever, that no Indian tribe shall henceforth reside south of that natural boundary extending from Green Bay up the Fox river, the two mile portage and down the Ousconsin to the Mississippi ; that they shall neither be suffered to occupy nor to hunt on grounds south of that line henceforth ; and that in case of actual violation of this restriction, they shall be compelled to pass the lakes, to the south, and never more be suffered to occupy the territory south of the existing line of the United States.

The necessity of a decided policy like this will be perceived, the more it is investigated ; and it is

sustained by a variety of the most important considerations, besides its justice; their removal beyond the Ousconsin would at once relieve our frontier from all apprehension of annoyance; the retaliatory broils and murders which will flow out of this war, and out of the deadly animosity and envy of the British will be averted; the funds hitherto lavished in the futile effort to bring the Indians to social habits, will be saved, and may be applied to more beneficial uses; to the construction of roads, spacious and passable at all seasons; the other Indian tribes witnessing a punishment so signal and effectual, will learn to avoid a similar fate; and those nations which may retain, either by Hudson's bay or Mexico, an intercourse with the savage tribes, will find their efforts frustrated in future by the remoteness of the Indians from our settled country, and the just severity and efficacy of the remedy which has been resorted to.

There remains to be considered, an exception that may be made to the proposal on the ground of practicability; or the possibility of restraining their inroads after they should have been driven beyond the line prescribed. The mere forcing them, it is to be presumed, will not be considered as impracticable with even a very small force, whenever their resources from Canada are intercepted or cut off; in this light it is a consideration purely military, and susceptible of demonstration upon military principles.

The durable exclusion, and prevention of their return, is a question of policy and safety, and points out the necessity of a more permanent and constant remedy than that by which they are impelled. The means by which this may be accomplished require to be considered.

From the source of the Illinois to the Upper and Lower Iowa towns, may be considered as about 450 miles of broken communication; a great part

of it uninhabitable in the present state of society; and as it is not competent in the upper part above Stoney river, and a considerable share between that river and the Illinois, to subsist any people, however savage; the line of defence would be drawn much shorter by the south base of Lake Michigan, west to the Mississippi, and east to the Miami.— To secure this frontier in perpetuity, a chain of military colonies might be formed on this line, of which the first should embrace the mouth of the St. Josephs river, the Calemet river, and Chicago; that should be the main frontier colony; the western might embrace the Mississippi on its left, and the forks of the Stoney river at the foot of the hills. Two or three colonies more might be placed within supporting distance of these in the intermediate space, with a chain of posts at the Grand-Pass of the Illinois; at the Peorias; and at Tippacanoe; a stable road should be established, secure and passable at all seasons from the eastern to the western flank.

Due attention should be paid to the accommodations of fuel, water, soil, and facility of communication in establishing the scites of these towns; and to establish them, the existing operations for public defence, might be made to concur in this great object; for example that of holding forth a title to five hundred, or even one thousand acres of the lands on those scites, to such persons as should undertake to proceed against the Indians, and reside upon the grounds, to be surveyed for the purpose; or three hundred acres for a continued settlement of two years; four hundred for three years; five hundred for four years; and a pre-emption to purchase at one dollar an acre one thousand acres on five years residence. Provision might be made to execute the surveys with the first expeditions of the coming spring, and the rolls for volunteers to settle might be opened through

the medium of some of the executives of the western states, who should be directed to publish the invitation and fix the points and times of rendezvous. The title to be established by actual residence alone; a smaller proportion of the land to volunteers for a shorter period.

To these colonies, four or five in number, might be distributed for three years, the same quantities of implements for husbandry and other useful utensils for civil life, which had been hitherto distributed among the savages. Five establishments of this kind, would find settlers, and four hundred men well provided with ammunition and arms, in each settlement, would be sufficient to exclude the whole of the Indian tribes from the territory south of them, for ever.

The expulsion of the British from Canada would secure the United States for ever after against savage war. The treatment of the Indians in Canada would be a subject of subsequent consideration, but it presents no difficulties nor obstacles to the plan here suggested.

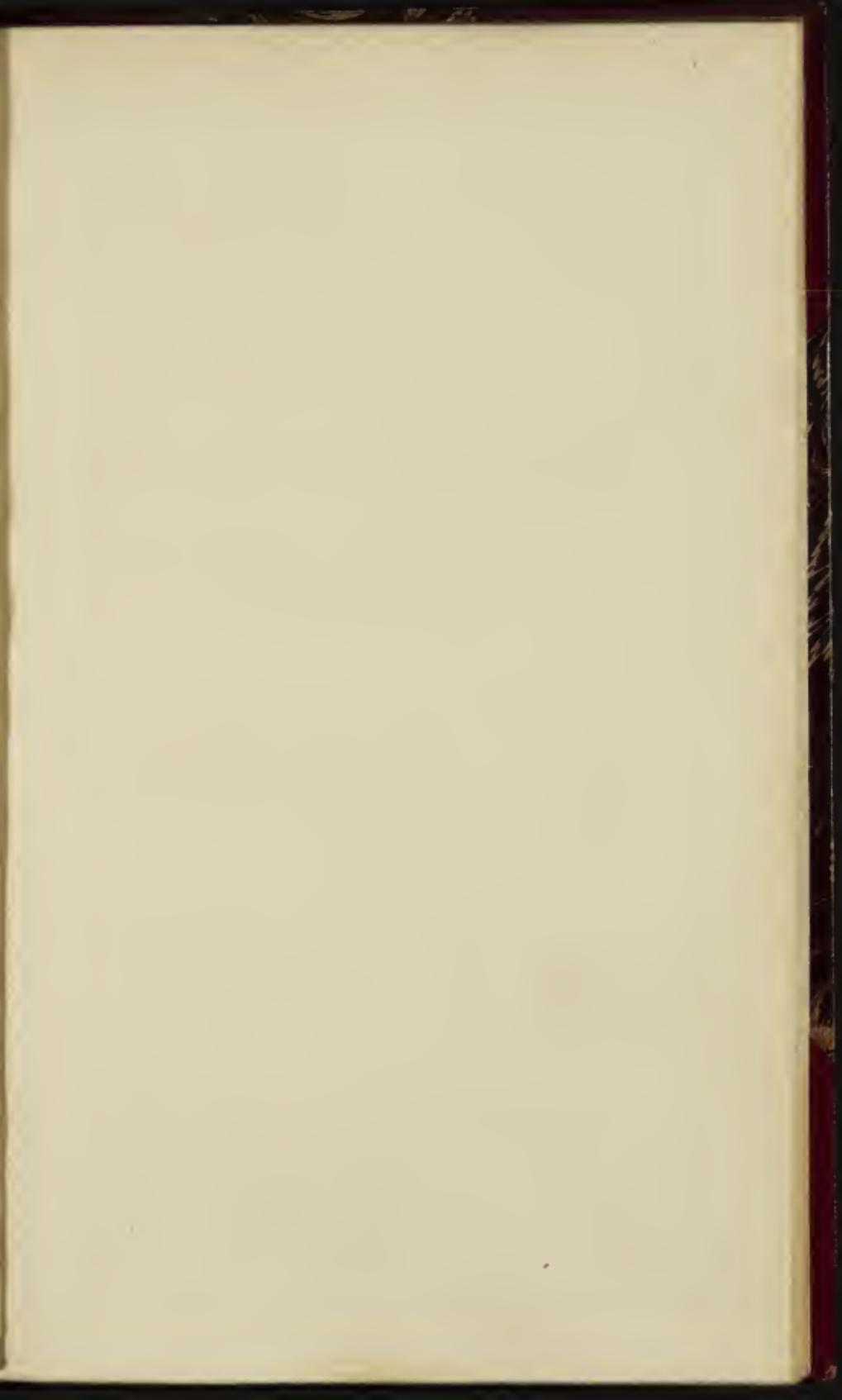
The proposal may in the present time be connected with the general plan of defence for that frontier, and the offer might be held forth, at this moment, to such as chose to embark in the war against the Indians, auxiliary to the force which may engage upon temporary terms, and who may not think of removing from their present habitations.

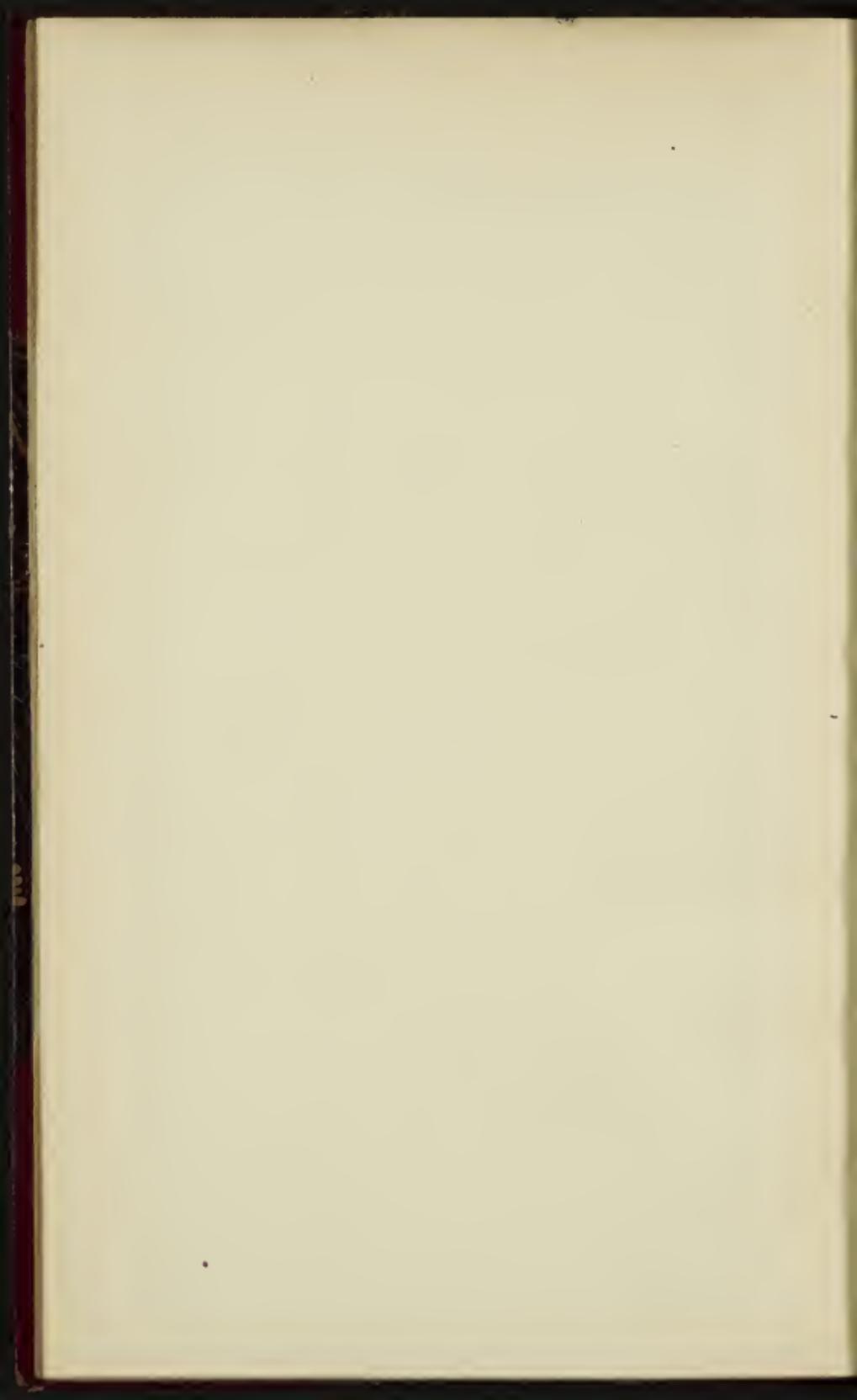
It requires no argument to show that there is a spirit of adventure on the frontier very well adapted to the object of those new colonies. The advantages to the union at large in a commercial and financial view, need not be pointed out: nor need the steps be suggested which would be proper to be taken to present to the perfidious savages themselves the cause of their punishment, nor to the peaceable tribes further west, the exemplary justice of it.

It may not be impertinent to add a general remark in this place; that no error can be so unfortunate in the policy of the United States at this moment, as to calculate upon a peace; perhaps no course could be more wise or prudent at this time, even if peace were desired or in prospect to-morrow, than to calculate upon the certainty of a trying and arduous war for three years; and with this impression, the absolute necessity of repressing the savage tribes with a strong hand, and with an irresistible effect, must be obvious; nor can it appear any other than prudent and wise to do so under any possible circumstances which can hereafter arise, political or commercial.

The writer has no other interest or object in view in volunteering his opinions, than the common interest which every lover of liberty and his country must feel, or not be worthy of either.

January 20th, 1813.









AYER

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